

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-15 CPR-02 NSC-10 RSR-01 RSC-01 SY-10

USSS-00 /058 W

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R 111220Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2521

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 4029

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TS, US

SUBJECT: BOURGUIBA VISIT

REF: TUNIS 3901, STATE 131167

1. ACTING FONMIN MAHMOUD MESTIRI ADVISED ME JULY 10 THAT PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA WOULD PREFER, IF POSSIBLE, TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT NIXON AROUND NOVEMBER 16 (RATHER THAN NOVEMBER 1 OR 2), THAT IS, SHORTLY AFTER VISIT OF BELGIAN KING BAUDOUIN TO TUNISIA (NOV 6-13 ACCORDING LATEST INFO).

2. MESTIRI PASSED THIS INFORMATION TO ME AT AIRPORT, JUST AFTER BOURGUIBA'S RETURN FROM GENEVA, AND WE DID NOT HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS WHY PRESIDENT WOULD PREFER THIS DATE RATHER THAN NOVEMBER 1 OR 2. ASSUME, HOWEVER, BOURGUIBA'S DOCTORS HAVE INDICATED THAT MID-NOVEMBER VISIT, DESPITE PROBABLE COOLER WEATHER, WOULD PERMIT HIM TO HAVE COMPLETE REST AFTER RETURN FROM WASHINGTON RATHER THAN FACE IMMEDIATELY LONG BAUDOUIN VISIT. IN PARTICULAR, ACCORDING TO CHATTI, DOCTORS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT ENERVATING EFFECTS OF SIX HOUR TIME CHANGE ON BOURGUIBA'S STRICT REGIME.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE ADVISE WHETHER FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16, OR DATE CLOSE TO THAT, WOULD BE POSSIBLE. TUNISIANS GREATLY

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APPRECIATE WASHINGTON EFFORTS TO SCHEDULE

PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA VISIT. IN ALL MY DISCUSSIONS, E.G.,
DIRECTOR CHATTI, FONMIN MASMOUDI, ETC., THESE OFFICIALS HAVE
STRESSED PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S HIGH
REGARD FOR PRESIDENT NIXON AND HIS DESIRE FOR A PRIVATE
MEETING WITH.
RELPH

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TUNIS04029
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS RELPH
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730739/aaaabcnt.tel
Line Count: 67
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 TUNIS 3901, STATE 131167
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01-Oct-2001 by elyme>; APPROVED <24-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BOURGUIBA VISIT
TAGS: PFOR, TS, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005